

Major Christian Leaders, Including Joel C. Rosenberg, Meet With Saudi Crown Prince in Groundbreaking Gathering

Now might not be the best time to visit Saudi Arabia, but a delegation of US evangelical leaders felt it was a risk worth taking. They met with controversial Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman and other Saudi leaders. It was filled with both political controversy and spiritual opportunity.

The visit came following a global firestorm over the death of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, but the planning began a long time ago.

The meeting between evangelical leaders in the US and Mohammed Bin Salman had been in the works for months, but it came to pass when the delegation made a visit here to the United Arab Emirates.

“There’s a lot of people who would say this is the wrong time to go to Saudi Arabia and meet with the leadership there,” author Joel Rosenberg told CBN News. “I understand that criticism, but I disagree.”

While realizing the potential for controversy, the group felt the opportunity to help Christians there was more important.

“Given the fact that we care about the people of Saudi Arabia, Christianity in the Arabian Peninsula, the desire to see more freedom of worship, even Christian churches being allowed to be built, this all seemed important to us to do,” Rosenberg said.

“When people ask, ‘why would you go, why would you meet’, I

mean as a Christian called to be a peacemaker, as an advocate for freedom of worship, as an advocate for tolerance and peaceful coexistence, my answer is how can I not?" Rev. Johnnie Moore said.

The delegation went not with a political agenda but with a Christian mission.

When I think of Saudi Arabia, I think of that verse, 'We are ambassadors for Christ. That's who we are representing, not the United States of America. We're representing the Lord Jesus Christ,' National Religious Broadcasters President Jerry Johnson said.

Pastor Skip Heitzig said, "it's an opportunity."

"You know in the Bible, (there are) people like Esther, who was in a royal court. Daniel approached several kings and filled several key positions. God used them to speak to people in authority, kings, and the Bible says we are to pray for them."

This is the latest in a series of meetings with Sunni Arab leaders, including Jordan's King Abdullah II, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and UAD Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The meetings are part of a long-term agenda.

"We aren't here for a short-term purpose. We are not here for a photo op. We could care less about that. We're here to build long-term relations and to benefit our brothers and sisters that are here in this region," former Congresswoman Michele Bachmann said.

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